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For Immediate Release  
November 10, 2004

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## **Mental health advance directive bills pass Senate**

**LANSING** – Patients would be permitted to appoint a patient advocate to make mental health treatment decisions for them under Senate legislation passed today, announced Sen. Bruce Patterson, R-Canton.

Patterson sponsored Senate Bills 684 and 1470-1472. SB 684 allows a court to order assisted outpatient treatment while SBs 1478-1472 allow a patient's advocate to request hospitalization for mental health care.

The package would establish the ability of patients to create psychiatric advance directives in the event they are later incapable of making their own decisions. The patients would be able to designate a physician authorized to make a determination of their ability to take part in mental health treatment decisions.

“This legislation is important to ensure that a mental health patient is being treated by someone who is familiar with that patient and their personal treatment history,” Patterson said. “Providing appropriate care that fulfills the patient's needs and wishes is highly desirable.”

These bills are tie-barred to SBs 683-686, a legislative package known as Kevin's Law. This legislation would create an outpatient treatment pathway as an alternative to hospitalization for individuals with certain mental illness. Left untreated, the mentally ill often end up homeless or incarcerated.

“Kevin's Law will safeguard the public by allowing family members and others to intervene to help secure needed treatment for individuals with mental illness before they become a danger to themselves or others,” Patterson said. “Protecting the public is a priority and this legislation allows families and physicians to do just that. I am pleased to see this legislation finally pass the Senate and I look forward to seeing it reach the governor's desk by year's end.”

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